

REMARKS

These remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed October 4, 2005.

The Invention

The invention, as now presented in amended claim 26, features a computer system that includes a mouse that is movable with respect to a work surface and includes a position sensor operative to interact with the work surface to derive a position signal. A plurality of application-specific profile elements are provided for a plurality of applications that define tactile signals to be sent to the tactile actuator when interacting with the corresponding application.

As presented in the application on page 3, lines 27 - 28, the invention can provide a user with meaningful tactile feedback from a general-purpose computer with a simple and inexpensive tactile device. A conventional mouse that moves with respect to a work surface and includes a position sensor that interacts with the surface, for example, can be inexpensively equipped with a tactile actuator. The result is a device that can provide the user of a general-purpose computer with a whole new realm of information—tactile information.

This tactile information can supplement visual navigation and thereby increase productivity, reduce errors, or both. These enhancements can be particularly important in detailed authoring tasks, such as word processing, or where there is a large amount of confusing information on the screen, such as in the case of a multi-tasking operating system with several windows open (page 4, lines 5-9).

Using a conventional mouse that moves with respect to a work surface can also offer the benefits of tactile feedback in a generally familiar and well-established control format. Users can therefore easily begin receiving the benefits of tactile feedback, without having to learn an unfamiliar, new type of control metaphor.

Claim 26 stands rejected as obvious over Rosenberg and Braun. Rosenberg discloses a three dimensional cursor control interface with force feedback usable with Computer Aided Design (CAD) systems. His apparatus includes a user manipulatable object coupled to a linkage. A host computer can provide force-feedback commands, which are said to allow a user to feel force feedback via the user manipulatable object.

Braun also discloses a force feedback system that is based on a linkage. In the described embodiment, the linkage is a "five-bar" linkage, although alternate embodiments are said to be able to be equipped with fewer or greater numbers of linkages (col. 10, lines 25-32). Suggested uses for this system are for virtual reality games and medical simulations.

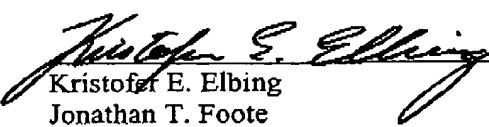
But nowhere do Rosenberg or Braun disclose or suggest the use of a mouse that moves with respect to a working surface that includes a position sensor that interacts with the surface. Instead, both Rosenberg and Braun disclose complex linkage-based structures that are said to provide feedback in advanced applications like CAD, virtual reality games, and medical simulations. Nowhere is there any disclosure or suggestion to equip a tactile sensor to a mouse that moves with respect to a working surface and includes a position sensor that interacts with the surface, as now claimed in amended claim 26.

Claim 39 distinguishes over the prior art of record for at least reasons similar to those advanced in support of claim 26. The remaining claims are dependant and distinguish over the prior art of record for at least the reason that they depend on an allowable claim.

Should further questions arise concerning this application, the Examiner is invited to call Applicant Kristofer E. Elbing at the number listed below. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-0750.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated


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